



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/306,448	05/06/99	WILLIAMSON	W

TERRY M GERSTEIN
1015 SALT MEADOW LANE
MCLEAN VA 22101

QM12/0227

EXAMINER

PREBILIC, P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3738	6

DATE MAILED: 02/27/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/306,448

Applicant(s)

Williamson IV et al

Examiner

Paul Prebilic

Group Art Unit

3738



Responsive to communication(s) filed on Dec 22, 2000

This action is FINAL.

Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claims

Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.

Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

The proposed drawing correction, filed on Dec 22, 2000 is approved disapproved.

The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

All Some* None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

received.

received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

Interview Summary, PTO-413

Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---

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The amendment filed December 22, 2000 is acknowledged. The proposed change to claim 3, line 1 could not be made, however, because the referenced language was not present in claim 3. It may be that the amendment was intended to claim 4 instead.

Drawings

This application has been filed with informal drawings which are acceptable for examination purposes only. Formal drawings will be required when the application is allowed.

Figure 1 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Correction is required.

The proposed drawing correction and/or the proposed substitute sheets of drawings, filed on December 22, 2000 have been approved.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 4 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With regard to claim 4, the claim scope is indefinite since the independent claim that claim 4 depends upon is directed to combinations, yet claim 4 is directed to the subcombination “tool”. For this reason, it is unclear whether claim 4 is intended to be to a combination or subcombination

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which would give it a broader scope. For this reason, claim 4 will be interpreted as a combination of the tool and prosthesis.

With regard to claims 16-20, under subsection "A", subparagraph "(3)" thereof, the language of these subparagraphs renders the claim scope indefinite because they are drawn to the prosthesis after implantation and not any structure present on the device as claimed. Therefore, it is unclear what the language of these subparagraphs is intended to imply. The amendment of December 22, 2000 nearly overcomes the rejection, but fails to make the language clearly inferential. For this reason, the Examiner suggests inserting the word "for" after "anchoring elements" in order to overcome this rejection.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-20 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 4-19 and 47-104 of U.S. Patent No. 6,047,607.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other

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because the present claims read on by what is set forth in the patented claims such that the present claims are clearly obvious in view thereof.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Williamson, IV, et al (US 5,716,370) because the present claims are by another inventive entity, and thus, the patent constitutes prior art against the present claims and renders it obvious.

Response to Amendment

The terminal disclaimer does not comply with 37 CFR 1.321(b) and/or (c) because:

The person who has signed the disclaimer has not stated the extent of his/her interest, or the business entity's interest, in the application/patent. See 37 CFR 1.321(b)(3).

In addition, the amendment failed to address the apparent conflict between the US Patent 5,716,370 and the present application which has a different inventive entity. A declaration stating the contribution of Mark Ortiz to the present claimed invention should be made since it appears that the claimed invention was fully disclosed in the patent. The declaration should particularly

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point out what claim limitations present in the pending claims are attributed to Mark Ortiz in collaboration with the other inventors.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Applicant is respectfully requested to provide a list of all copending applications that set forth similar subject matter to the present claims. A copy of such copending claims is respectfully requested in response to this Office action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Prebilic whose telephone number is (703) 308-2905. The examiner normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached on (703) 308-2111. The fax phone number for this Technology Center is (703) 305-3580.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Technology Center 3700 receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.



Paul Prebilic
Primary Examiner
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